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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : Comments on the Recommendations Made by
Problem Solving Seminars Nos. 1, 2, and 3

REFERENCE : Multiple Addressee Memo dtd 17 Nov 69 fr DD/S,
subj: Reports of Problem Solving Seminars
Nos. 1, 2, and 3

1. This memorandum is for your information only.

2. As requested by the reference, this memorandum sets forth the Director of Logistics' comments relative to the recommendations contained within the reports resulting from the three Support Directorate Seminars (SDS).

3. It is obvious from the clarity of thought and cogent observations made by the Seminar participants that all three groups treated the questions assigned with intelligence and enthusiasm. The groups displayed an insight as to the perplexing problems now facing the Support Services with respect to increasing productivity and efficiency, despite limitations imposed by budget and personnel restrictions.

4. Although the assignments given to each of the three Seminar groups differentiated in context, all of the questions involved a deep concern with human resources and how best to develop these resources to achieve optimum results in providing for future middle- and senior-level managerial talent.

5. Before commenting specifically on the recommendations arising from the Seminars, it should be noted that all three groups proposed recommendations that shared a commonality with respect to concern for the development of human resources. Indeed, the three Seminars also shared, to a large extent, a commonality of subject matter in stating objectives and making observations, the germane topic being one of developing existing human resources for mutual benefit of the employees as well as the Agency.

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6. The questions assigned to SDS-1, i.e., "How can new Support requirements be met under increased budget and personnel controls?" permitted a broader latitude in developing recommendations than did the assignments given to the other two groups, particularly since the question dealt with budget as well as personnel and inferred that new and increased Support requirements would be met despite controls which served to reduce monetary and personnel resources. Listed below are the SDS-1 recommendations together with the appropriate Director of Logistics' comments:

a. Recommendation. A Resources Allocation Board be established to evaluate requests for significant increases to Support operations and to recommend priorities. Further, that this Board be established on a Support Directorate level to include senior representatives from other services.

Comment. It is assumed that "resources" would include the human equation. It is not believed that a permanent Resources Allocation Board would be necessary as a continuing type of activity, although there would be some value in convening such a board on an ad hoc basis to handle special situations. Any representation from other Directorates should participate only in an advisory capacity.

b. Recommendation. Schedule Seminars between Support Office Heads and Support Information Processing Staff (SIPS) managers.

Comment. The idea of such Seminars to promote better understanding of SIPS capabilities and problems and to ensure that SIPS understands the needs of management has merit. It is assumed that the term "Office Heads" would include all of the senior managers within the Support Services who would either derive a beneficial product from SIPS programs or would have some input in connection with automation requirements. Office of Logistics participation and interest in the SIPS programs are extensive.

c. Recommendation. "Belt tightening" to achieve more effective use of existing resources and rearrangement of priorities.

Comment. This recommendation was not specific enough to warrant a positive comment, but other recommendations contained within the SDS-1 report do stress maximum use of resources in conjunction with restrictions imposed by budget and personnel limitations.

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d. Recommendation. Development of additional Support generalists with broad skills enabling them to perform tasks common to any of the Support Services.

Comment. The above recommendation stated, in part, that because of reduction to the financial administration burden in the field and greater assumption of financial controls by headquarters, the training of additional Support generalists need not be geared to achieve the level of competence required heretofore. It is agreed that training and development of additional Support specialists as managers is desirable, but personnel reductions, particularly those applicable to foreign field stations, place an even greater burden on Support personnel. Thus, the level of competence achieved should be higher rather than lower. Support generalists should be selected from those people who have had considerable experience in a Support element. They should be at least a specialist in one of the Support Services and extremely knowledgeable in other Support areas. Training for Support specialists should provide a comprehensive knowledge of budgeting.

e. Recommendation. Consolidate related Support activities in one contiguous area.

Comment. To have all of the Support activities centered in one location would be the ideal solution and would serve to promote efficiency. Centralization of Support activities is not practical nor possible under the existing circumstances, but it is a problem area which is receiving adequate attention. It is equally important that Support activities also be contiguous to the Operating Components being serviced by Support. Centering of Support activities in one location would not necessarily result in increased effectiveness, but it could result in certain economies.

f. Recommendation. Reorganize Support Directorate responsibilities to be structured around basic resources of men, money, and material.

Comment. Although the current SIPS structure was quoted as a model for the proposed reorganization, the recommendation was not precise, did not offer a clear plan for the reorganization, and there is insufficient material upon which to base a comment. This subject appears to require additional study and possibly a more definite recommendation.

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6. The SDS-2 question assignment addressed itself to the subject of the desirability of increasing opportunities for Support inter-Office assignments. Following are the recommendations made by SDS-2 and the applicable comments:

a. Recommendation. Establish a board or panel of senior officers for review, selection, and assignment of persons to be developed.

Comment. This recommendation relates to the proposals made by SDS-1 in connection with the establishment of a Resources Allocation Board as it relates to human resources and the development of Support generalists. The creation of such a board or panel to assist in the selection of qualified Support careerists for high-level management training and development has merit. Of particular interest is the proposal that the board be responsible for the assignment of personnel in the program regardless of the individual Office(s) involved.

b. Recommendation. Appoint a project manager for day-to-day management of the program.

Comment. A project manager would be a mandatory adjunct to any program geared to the selection and development of managerial talent. A project manager, directly responsible to the senior officer board, would be in a position to assess the progress of candidates and to make positive recommendations for further schooling and/or assignments.

c. Recommendation. Establish a target date for the establishment of the senior officer board as noted above.

Comment. A target date could be established subsequent to further development of the basic recommendation and the finalization of the character and charter of the proposed board.

7. The question afforded SDS-3 was specifically directed to the type of midcareer training which should be made available to employees not selected for the Midcareer Executive Development Course (MEDC). Again, this group was profoundly concerned with the development of human resources. Its recommendations and the appropriate comments are listed below:

a. Recommendation: Strive to make maximum use of MEDC.

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Comment. The MEDC is a valuable tool in developing Support personnel, but it is believed the program results would be enhanced by increased followup action to ensure maximum utilization and further career training and development once a candidate has completed the course.

b. Recommendation. Establish a 2-week course comparable to Phase II of MEDC to be given outside the Washington metropolitan area for qualified personnel (GS-13 and GS-14) not selected for MEDC --the course to be identified as the Support and Agency Review (SAR) Program.

Comment. This recommendation and the recommendation immediately above are related to the primary proposals expressed by SDS-2 in its desire to establish a board of senior officers for review, selection, and assignment of personnel to be developed. Since the number of candidates selected for MEDC must necessarily be limited, the proposal that a separate course comparable to MEDC be given to GS-13 and GS-14 personnel not receiving the benefit of mid-career training should certainly be pursued.

c. Recommendation. Establish a counseling function on the DD/S Staff for the purpose of providing counsel to qualified participants and to administer the program.

Comment. This recommendation is similar to a proposal made by SDS-2 for the appointment of a project manager to furnish day-to-day management of training programs. It is not considered practical that a single counselor located on the DD/S Staff would be able to counsel or cope with the large number of GS-13 and GS-14 personnel not participating in the MEDC program. Each Office of the Support Services has officers concerned with counseling and career guidance.

8. In the comments, the Director of Logistics has highlighted the mutual concern evidenced by the three SDS groups in the area of development of human resources. This Office agrees that emphasis should be given to expanding development of candidates to be schooled for senior management positions. The existing training and career development opportunities prevalent within the Support Services are of paramount importance in expanding the growth potential of Support officers. Such "in-house" training readies

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candidates for nomination to additional training and inter-Office assignments leading toward acquisition of senior-level management skills. The Logistics Career Service administers a broad training program for Logistics Career Service officers. This program is designed to equip personnel to meet requirements of the positions to which they are assigned, to prepare career officers for reassignment and rotation, and to ensure their continued broadening to facilitate career development within the Agency.

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George E. Meloon
Director of Logistics